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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/721,691	11/26/2003	Karl Reinitz	0121	6148
32366	7590	07/11/2006	EXAMINER	
BRUCE E. WEIR 12 SPARROW VALLEY COURT MONTGOMERY VILLAGE, MD 20886-1265			FOSTER, MARLEE CHRISTINE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3731	

DATE MAILED: 07/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/721,691	REINITZ, KARL	
	Examiner Marlee C. Foster	Art Unit 3731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 November 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/26/03</u>	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Oath/Declaration

1. The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP §§ 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because:

It does not identify the foreign country of residence of each inventor. The residence information may be provided on either an application data sheet or supplemental oath or declaration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-8, 13-14, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rioux et al. (U.S. 2004/0236356). Rioux et al. disclose, in the figures, a suturing apparatus 18 comprising a body, a needle having a tip capable of penetrating tissue with a tapered portion 26, a moveable arm 46 pivotably mounted within the body, and an actuator 42 that moves the arm between an open and closed position. As shown in Figure 1, the needle has a passage to hold suture material. Rioux et al. disclose a spring coil 15 that aids in the movement of the arm. Regarding claims 8 and 14, Rioux et al. disclose the materials of the apparatus may any materials known in the art for medical devices (paragraph 0046).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. Claims 9-12 and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rioux et al. (U.S. 2004/0236356) in view of Greenstein (U.S. 5,964,773). Rioux et al. disclose a suturing apparatus comprising a body, a needle, a moveable arm, and an actuator that moves the arm. Rioux et al. lack two handles on either side of the body with depressions on opposite sides of the body. Greenstein teaches a suturing tool with handles 15 disposed on either sides of the body, having depressions on opposite sides of the body, disposed on the underside of the body. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to create the apparatus of Rioux et al. using the handles with the depression of Greenstein's device. Handles with depressions facilitate the manipulation

of the instrument within a confined body space. Regarding claims 12 and 15, the Examiner takes Official Notice that it is known in the art that handles disposed on opposite sides of the device will facilitate ambidextrous use of the instrument.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Buelna (U.S. 5,468,251) and Yoon (U.S. 5,665,096) disclose suturing apparatus with a needle and a movable shield.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marlee C. Foster whose telephone number is (571) 272-5072. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 8:00 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhtuan Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MCF


ANHTUAN T. NGUYEN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER


6/26/06